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Letter dated 28 December 1992 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Yugoslavia to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

In connection with the letter of the Permanent Representative of the Republic of Croatia to the United Nations of 17 December 1992 (A/47/804-S/24982), denying the involvement of the Croatian Army in the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, I would like to draw your attention to the following.

1. The involvement and engagement of the Croatian Army in Bosnia and Herzegovina has been confirmed by many, including the Secretary-General of the United Nations, the General Assembly and the Security Council.

The Secretary-General in section IV of his report to the Security Council of 24 November 1992 (S/24848), stated: "Security Council resolutions calling for the withdrawal of foreign forces from Bosnia and Herzegovina remain largely unimplemented. The Croatian Army is reliably reported to be engaged extensively in the Republic, particularly in Herzegovina and in the Orasje area".

The Secretary-General further confirmed that in section IV of his report to the General Assembly of 3 December 1992 (A/47/747): "... it [UNPROFOR] has received credible reports of extensive involvement of forces of the Croatian Army in Bosnia and Herzegovina". In the same report, the Secretary-General stated: "Several brigades of the Croatian Army are also reliably reported to be actively engaged in the conflict."

Moreover, this involvement has been publicly acknowledged by the President of Croatia himself. In a recent interview published in The New York Times on 18 December 1992, Mr. Tudjman was quoted as saying: "Where we have fought in Bosnia, it has been to defend those areas where Croats are the majority."

The engagement of the Croatian Army in northern Bosnia was also publicly confirmed by the Croatian Minister of Defence, Mr. G. Susak. In the Zagreb daily Novi vjesnik, he not only admitted the presence of the Croatian Army in the area of Orasje (North-East Bosnia), but also stated that he openly acknowledged this to Mr. Cyrus Vance and Lord Owen. In addition, he revealed that the Force Commander of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR), General Nambiar, has protested the presence of the Croatian Army troops in the area of Orasje.

Bearing all this in mind, it is surprising that the reports of the involvement and engagement of the Croatian Army in Bosnia and Herzegovina could possibly be rejected as "fabrications, misinterpretations and blatantly false".

The engagement of the army of the Republic of Croatia in Bosnia and Herzegovina represents a clear violation of the commitments undertaken at the London Conference, relevant decisions of the General Assembly and the resolutions of the Security Council, in particular resolution 757 (1992), adopted under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter.

2. In addition, open threats of "possible future involvement" of the armed forces of the Republic of Croatia in the territory of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as provisions of weapons by the Republic of Croatia to Muslims and Croats fighting in Bosnia and Herzegovina, could only further exacerbate the situation in Bosnia and Herzegovina and jeopardize the current peace efforts in the framework of the International Conference on the Former Yugoslavia.

I should be grateful if you would have the text of the present letter circulated as an official document of the General Assembly, under the agenda items entitled "Review of the implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security" and "Human rights questions: Human rights situations and reports of special rapporteurs and representatives", and of the Security Council.

(Signed) Dragomir DJOKIĆ
Ambassador
Chargé d'affaires a.i.